

Most fish are a healthy food choice. But some fish have harmful chemicals in them. This brochure will help you make good choices when eating fish.

Are fish good for my family and me to eat?



YES!

Fish have a lot of healthy protein, vitamins, and minerals.

- ✓ The oils found in fish are healthy for babies and children.
- ✓ Fish are low in saturated fat.
- ✓ Eating fish may help prevent heart disease in adults.



Why are some fish unsafe to eat?

Some of our lakes, rivers, and oceans are polluted with harmful chemicals like mercury. Many of these chemicals do not go away. In fact, they build up in the parts of fish that you eat. Most fish are safe to eat. But some fish have high amounts of chemicals that may cause health problems if you eat them often.

Who is at greatest risk from harmful chemicals in fish?

- Breast-fed babies
- Unborn babies
- Children under 15 years old
- People with ongoing health problems such as heart conditions, thyroid disorders, and immune system disorders



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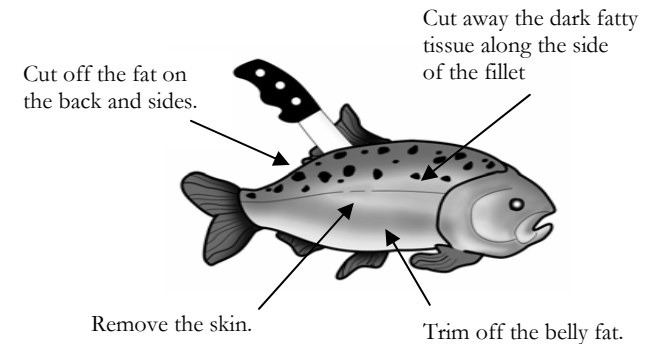
What health problems can these chemicals cause?

- Harm to a child's brain development, which can cause learning disorders and behavioral problems
- Decrease in the body's ability to fight off illness
- Cancer
- Liver damage
- Mercury poisoning



How should I clean and cook fish to make sure that it is safe to eat?

- ✓ First, trim away the fat (see the picture below). Most of the chemicals are stored in the fat, except for mercury. Mercury cannot be removed from fish.
- ✓ Take off the dark fatty tissue along the backbone, sides, and belly. Take out organs such as the liver and stomach. Do not eat any of these fish parts.
- ✓ Either remove the skin or poke holes in it before cooking. This allows fat to drain off. Do not eat the skin.
- ✓ Bake, broil, or grill the fish so that the fat drips away.
- ✓ If you deep fry fish, use vegetable oil. Do not re-use the oil—throw it away.



Mercury in Fish

Mercury cannot be removed from fish by trimming and cooking. Use the following information to choose fish and seafood from the grocery store or restaurant.

You can eat these fish 2 times a week:

Anchovies	Catfish (farm-raised)
Crab	Crawfish
Flatfish (flounder, sole)	Herring
Mullet	Oysters
Pollock	Perch (ocean or freshwater)
Sardines	Salmon (canned, frozen, fresh)
Shrimp	Scallops
Tilapia	Squid
Whitefish	Trout (freshwater)

-OR-

You can eat these fish 1 time a week:

Cod	Jack smelt
Mahi mahi	Tuna (canned light)
Snapper	Sheepshead

-OR-

You can eat these fish 2 times a month:

Bluefish	Bass (sea, striped, rockfish)
Halibut	Lobster
Sablefish	Scorpion fish
Tuna (Albacore, canned white)	Tuna (fresh, frozen)
Weakfish (sea trout)	

-OR-

You can eat these fish 1 time a month:

Grouper	Mackerel
Marlin	Orange Roughy



Do not eat these fish:

Shark, Swordfish, Tilefish,
King Mackerel

Other brochures available:

- Eat Safe Wild Game in Bay, Midland, and Saginaw Counties
- Finding Safe Fish in the Saginaw Bay Watershed
- Michigan Family Fish Consumption Guide



To get your free copies
and more information, contact:

The Michigan Department of
Community Health, at:

1-800-MI-TOXIC
(1-800-648-6942)

or visit:

www.michigan.gov/fishandgameadvisory

Michigan Department
of Community Health



Jennifer M. Granholm, Governor
Janet Olszewski, Director

Eat Safe Fish



This guide is for you if:

- You eat fish from Michigan's lakes or rivers
- You eat fish from grocery stores or restaurants
- You have young children
- You are pregnant or may become pregnant